

**Bill Summary**  
1<sup>st</sup> Session of the 58<sup>th</sup> Legislature

<b>Bill No.:</b>	<b>SB 222</b>
<b>Version:</b>	<b>CS</b>
<b>Request No.:</b>	<b>1877</b>
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Sen. Standridge</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>02/23/2021</b>

**Bill Analysis**

The CS for SB 222 modifies the definition of “bullying” within the School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act to include behavior that involves a power imbalance and is repeated or highly likely to be repeated. The measure requires a school district board of education to update its discipline and bullying policy annually. The measure allows a student, school employee, school volunteer or the parent or legal guardian of a student to report an act of bullying and requires anonymous reports to be investigated in the same manner as other reports. The measure provides immunity from a cause of action to school employees, school volunteers, students and parents or legal guardians of students who promptly report incidents of bullying in good faith. It requires notification to be provided to the parents or legal guardians of a reported victim and reported perpetrator of bullying within 24 hours of receiving a report of bullying.

The measure requires immediate notification of the parents or legal guardians of a student who expresses suicidal thoughts or intentions or who encourages another student to commit suicide. The bill requires a bullying policy to contain a statement prohibiting retaliation against a school employee who notifies the district board of education or the State Department of Education of noncompliance with the discipline and bullying policy. The measure directs a district board of education to hold at least one public hearing prior to adopting or amending the bullying policy and to submit the approved policy to the State Department of Education within 30 days of adoption. The bill also requires a district superintendent to provide a report on bullying prevention activities and reported incidents of bullying to the district board of education at least once each semester at a public meeting. It requires district boards of education to provide each employee and newly hired employee with a copy of the bullying policy and an explanation of his/her responsibilities.

Prepared by: Kalen Taylor